



**NEITHER HET
NOR HOMO:
THE POLITICS OF THE IN
BETWEEN**

by Liz Unna • see page 5



**BURUNDI:
BLOODY PRESENT,
TROUBLED FUTURE**

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THE MCGILL DAILY

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Ride my stallion, Morag since 1911

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1993

Student coalition: Buy now, pay later

Do students really want a post-graduate tax?

BY JOYA BALFOUR AND DAMION STODOLA

A major Québec student organization has called on the provincial government to abandon any plans for tuition increases.

L'Organisation Nationale Universitaire (ONU) proposed at a press conference last Tuesday that the government implement an Income Contingency Repayment plan as an alternative to tuition fees. With an Income Contingent Repayment system, students pay for their education through a percentage of income taxes after graduation.

Serge Charlebois, spokesperson for ONU and president of the Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec (FEUQ), said that Income Contingency plans would increase student access to university education.

"The [Income Contingency] study should solve the problems of accessibility," he said, referring to financial barriers facing students.

ONU was created a year ago in the goal of uniting all students in Québec, with the sole purpose of fighting tuition fee increases. It represents over 200 000 students across the province, including member organizations FEUQ, the Rassemblement des associations de cycles supérieurs du Québec (Graduate students), and the Fédération des associations québécoises en éducation permanente (Continuing Education students).

There is widespread fear in the student movement of impending tuition fees increases. This follows a report published last year by the province's Minister of Finance, Daniel Johnson, which called for increased tuition fees to match the Canadian national average.

Yet, Statistics Canada shows that average salaries in Québec are considerably lower than in the rest of Canada. If tuition was set at the Canadian average, it would be comparatively more expensive for Quebecers.

Currently, Québec has the lowest tuition fees in Canada and the province would have to increase fees at least 50 per cent to attain the Canadian average.

Income Contingency plans have come under severe attack by other student organisations. In a study released by the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) called *Com-*

promising Access, Income Contingency plans were criticized for harming accessibility to post-secondary education.

Based on empirical statistics from Australia and Sweden (where Income Contingency plans have been in effect for years), the report reveals that fewer students are attending university.

In addition, the report maintains Income Contingency plans have lost their progressive nature, resulting in graduates paying more through taxes than they would otherwise have paid before Income Contingency plans came into effect.

Eric Laferrière, vp external for the Post-Graduate Student Society (PGSS) said PGSS does not have an official position on Income Contingency plans, but he personally believes that they fall short of their theoretical goals.

"The system [Income Contingency plans in Australia] cannot finance itself on richer graduates," said Laferrière. "They [the govern-



Serge Charlebois

ment] are being forced to lower the tax threshold — losing its progressive nature."

Andrew Work, vp external of the Students' Society, believes that In-

come Contingency plans do not affect the present situation. "It is what happens at home that determines who goes to university. [Income Contingency plan] doesn't change the accessibility situation, nor the problem of underfunding."

The Students' Society, as of now, does not have a policy on Income Contingency plans, but there is a tuition study group currently meeting with Work to discuss the issue.

"We're just looking at it right now,

and once it goes through the student group, it will be tabled in council," Work said.

Other plans presented by ONU included optimizing resources given to Québec universities, and fiscal intervention in enterprise.

One for all and all for what?

Charlebois is eager to profess that L'Organisation Nationale Universitaire (ONU) is the most united university student movement in Canada.

"We have never been as united as we are now. We have created a whole social debate that should be frightening to the Québec government."

Student leaders see it otherwise. Andrew Work says ONU are unable to display direction. "Their financial committee has no clear mission and it is not clear enough on how money will be spent. McGill did not have enough say in what's going on."

Laferrière agreed with the principle of a united student movement but said the ONU organization has none.

"The structure is relatively loose," he said. "It is not technically a separate organisation."

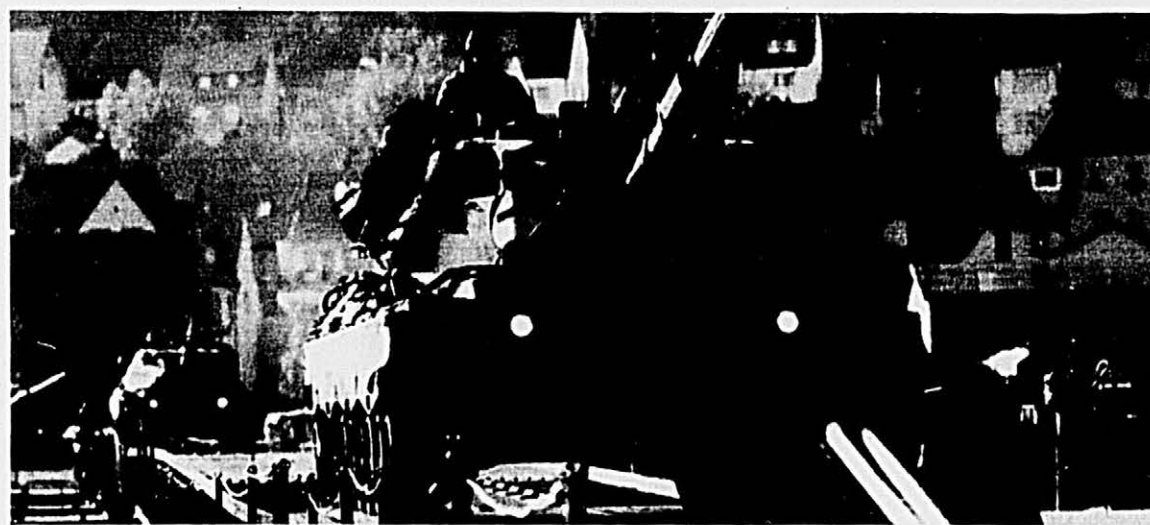
Laferrière, who has attended ONU's weekly meetings, said the decision making process is undemocratic. "The meetings are very informal; they have no motions and no voting procedure," he said.

According to Laferrière, ONU has no concrete charter and constitution and this leads to an alienation of the executive from the student base.

Yet Charlebois claims the voting procedure is very democratic. "All decisions are made by consensus," he said. "Unanimity is the voting procedure."

It remains to be seen if ONU will be given its lauded electoral weight following next year's provincial election. ONU has still to overcome its credibility with students regarding its financial and organizational structures.

— Joya Balfour and Damion Stodola



Canadian arms exported to human rights violators

Military companies find new markets in dictators and despots

BY GRAHAM COOK

VANCOUVER (CUP) — With the end of the Cold War, the Canadian arms industry is not scaling back — it is expanding into new markets.

"Right now the general trend is that Canadian companies are expanding military exports into the

Third World," said Steve Staples of End the Arms Race, a British Columbia peace issues coalition. Arms exports to the Third World by Canada have increased sixfold in the last three years.

In 1992 more than \$1 billion of Canadian-made military equipment left our borders. More than

5000 Canadian companies have received military contracts.

Almost a quarter of this went to Third World countries recognized as human rights violators, according to Project Ploughshares, a Waterloo, Ontario-based watchdog

Continued on Page 6

CROSS-CANADA BRIEFS

All profs should speak English in Alberta

An Alberta politician has been called racist for his suggestion that mandatory tests be given to professors who do not speak English clearly.

Tory MLA Lorne Taylor told the Alberta legislature that professors without a good grasp of English should be required to take a verbal test before being hired.

He said there are a number of teachers without a good command of the language and that students are suffering as a result.

"Students should be able to understand professors when they're speaking," he said.

Jim Marino, president of the Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations, said Taylor's suggestion was offensive and based on false information.

"This is not true and can only refer to those speaking English with some sort of accent," said Marino. "It's a racist remark."

Alberta's advanced education minister Jack Ady said he receives occasional complaints from students, but he doesn't see language deficiencies as a big problem.

"It's not a problem that seems to be prevalent in the system," Ady said.

But Ben Rogers, vice president of the University of Calgary student council, said he often hears complaints about professors with accents.

"It may not be an issue for the minister of advanced education, but it certainly is an issue for a large number of students who pay money and expect to be educated," said Rogers.

Taylor has also suggested upping the workload of professors, particularly in the area of classroom teaching, where he said most professors only instruct 12 hours per week.

— The Gauntlet, University of Calgary (CUP)

U of Manitoba students fear classes with accused student

Some University of Manitoba students are frightened and outraged after learning they must attend classes with a student charged with attempted murder.

A 20-year-old male Arts student was charged February 11 with the attempted murder of a young aboriginal woman. The victim is now mute and half paralyzed after receiving 12 stab wounds to her head, chest and buttocks.

The university received a flood of complaints after it was revealed in October that the student is still attending classes.

"We students have a right to safety and less fear on campus," said one female classmate who wished to remain anonymous. "He is a clear and present danger."

University vice president James Gardener says the student cannot be prevented from attending classes. In

order to exclude him from the campus, an internal hearing process would have to take place with the student given the opportunity to represent himself.

"Under our justice system the accused is innocent until proven guilty," Gardener said. "There is nothing the university can do to stop him from attending classes."

At an Oct. 6 preliminary hearing, Provincial Court Judge John Guy ruled that sufficient evidence existed to send the case to trial.

The trial date will be set December 8. Crown prosecutor Dale Tesarowski estimated that the trial will probably not begin until next spring.

A publication ban was imposed on the details of the case.

— the Manitoban, University of Manitoba (CUP)

High school grades aren't all alike

TORONTO (CUP) — Differences in high school marks are making it increasingly difficult for universities to gauge students' abilities, according to the provost of McMaster University.

Arthur Heidebrecht told the Ontario Royal Commission on Learning that high school marks are not a reliable method of evaluating student abilities for admission.

"The discrepancy is quite marked," Heidebrecht said. "You can get a spread of as much as 10 to 15 per cent in difference of students from one school to another."

Heidebrecht said the main problem is reflected in unequal marking from one school to another.

"It is not that a school is doing a better or worse job preparing students, but how this is reflected in grading," he said.

Heidebrecht suggested provincial standardized testing be incorporated into student evaluation in the final year of high school to give universities a better basis for comparison of students from different schools.

He also sees evidence of so-called "mark inflation" — although the number of students finishing high school with straight A's has increased dramatically in recent years, he is doubtful that this is reflective of students actually performing better.

Engineering schools at both U of T and the University of Waterloo have used mark weighting of different schools based on performance of past students since the mid-1970s.

According to Sally Cumming, manager of student services for applied science and engineering at U of T, 65 per cent of Ontario schools for which records are

Concordia student politics gets political

The Coalition for Democratic Elections in El Salvador got a warmer welcome from the Concordia University Students' Association (CUSA) than they did at McGill two weeks ago. CUSA unanimously voted to support the Coalition's efforts on campus at a Council meeting last Thursday.

McGill Students' Society rejected an identical motion on the grounds that support for the Coalition was not of immediate concern to students and could be a

"politically divisive issue."

"With CUSA's support, the Coalition has a lot more credibility on campus," said Andrew Green, a member of the Concordia Latin America Committee who spoke on behalf of the motion at the CUSA meeting last week.

The Coalition is a Canada-wide organization which will work on public education in Canada and El Salvador in preparation for next year's national elections in the Central American country.

—Kristin Andrews



DAILY STAFF
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AT FIVE

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Burundi's future in doubt

Democracy quashed as military assassinates country's leader

BY GWEN SCHULMAN

Only four weeks ago Burundi was being hailed internationally as a shining light in a region wrought with violence and tension. But an October 21 military coup d'état brought a swift end to Burundi's four month experiment with multi-party democracy.

Within hours the country's first democratically elected president since independence was executed along with at least four of his ministers and a number of regional leaders. Since then up to one million Burundians have fled both the violence orchestrated by the army and the cycle of vengeance it has unleashed among civilians.

Now, Burundi is in a state of chaos, its young progressive leadership has been largely eliminated, and there is fear that the conflict could spread beyond Burundi's borders, unleashing a regional war of untold proportions.

In an apparent effort to bring some semblance of stability to the region, the United Nations sent special envoy James Jonah to Burundi to assess the situation. Jonah has agreed to communicate to the UN Secretary General the need for an international force to be deployed in Burundi to ensure the safety of the government's returns and to oversee the constitution of a new army.

On October 28, regional leaders met in Rwanda to establish a concerted response to the Burundian crisis. Those present included representatives from Tanzania, Zaire, and the host country, as well as leader of the exiled Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU), and observers from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

The leaders issued a statement calling on the Burundian army to unconditionally return to its barracks. It also made an appeal to the OAU and the UN to work in concert to establish an international intervention force, made up primarily of African contingents, which would be acceptable to the FRODEBU government.

It also called on the international community to take concrete

action to bring an end to the massacres currently being perpetrated in Burundi, and to lend material support to the refugees flowing into neighbouring countries.

Tutsi Domination

Burundi emerged thirty years ago from decades of divisive Belgian colonial rule with a political system that accorded the minority Tutsi ethnic group a virtual monopoly of political, military and economic power over the Hutu majority who represent 85 per cent of the population. The Union for National Progress (UPRONA) maintained its control over the country with repression perpetrated by its ethnically-based army.

Burundi's independence years have been marked by no less than seven pogroms against the Hutus, including the virtual elimination of the entire Hutu elite and a large proportion of the peasantry in 1972. Within weeks about 150 000 people, in a country of just over 3 million, were massacred. Almost the same number perished in campaigns by the Burundian army in 1988 and 1991.

Major Pierre Buyoya assumed the leadership of UPRONA in a 1987 coup. Facing increasingly organised resistance to the Tutsi aristocracy, he implemented a series of reforms that led to the legalisation of political parties and presidential and legislative elections in June and July of this year. The Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU), assumed the leadership of the opposition movement, and enjoyed widespread grassroots support.

Melchior Ndadaye, the party's founder and former leader of the UBU, a worker's party in Rwanda, returned to Burundi in 1983 (following 11 years in exile) and spent nine years underground organizing the resistance. In 1988 he was briefly jailed by Buyoya for demanding greater democracy and denouncing the atrocities perpetrated by the army.

Against incredible odds FRODEBU swept to power in the elections, which were declared free and fair by international observers and monitoring groups. As an over-

whelming attestation of popular support for political change, over 97 per cent of eligible voters cast their ballots. Ndadaye became the country's first Hutu president with 67.79 per cent of the vote, and FRODEBU won 65 of the 81 seats in Parliament.

Buyoya accepted the results and the transition was carried out relatively peacefully, despite a failed coup attempt days after the elections.

Ndadaye adopted a moderate political program that aimed to progressively incorporate Hutus into Burundi's power structures. But it was also carefully crafted to encourage national reconciliation and assuage the fears of the Tutsi community. He appointed a Tutsi Upronsite, Sylvie Kinigi as Prime Minister, and out of 23 portfolios in his government 13 were held by FRODEBU members and 6 by members of UPRONA; nine of the 23 ministers were Tutsi.

Reform of the army remained one of the most urgent but dangerous tasks. Ndadaye's first tentative steps towards this goal were a proposal for the introduction of 2500 Hutus into its lower echelons. But this was sufficient to provoke extreme reaction from the military. At dawn on October 21 at dawn members of the army stormed the Presidential Palace and hours later tortured and killed Ndadaye, several key government ministers and leaders of the National Assembly.

Civilians pay the cost

The Army Chief-of-Staff Colonel Bikomagu has denied involvement in the coup and has stated

repeatedly that it was orchestrated by junior officers of the 11th Battalion and the 1st Artillery. But there is no evidence that any high ranking members of the army, including Bikomagu, took steps to stop the coup or the violence that ensued. A list of putschists released by surviving members of the FRODEBU government includes Bikomagu, and other high ranking officers, ministers and the Secretary General of the former UPRONA government.

The botched coup attempt has

powers, and has called for an international force to guarantee its security.

These last few weeks have, above all, been a tragedy for Burundian civilians. Since the coup there have been widespread killings by both soldiers and civilians in the provinces. Soldiers have reportedly executed several provincial governors and other local government officials appointed by the FRODEBU government. There are also reports of further assassinations and shootings in the capital. Ndadaye's death has apparently provoked revenge killings of Tutsis by armed Hutu civilians.

According to a report issued by two Amnesty International workers present in Burundi at the time of the coup, "Very soon after the coup, we heard reports of killings in the provinces, of Hutu civilians taking up arms and killing their Tutsi neighbours."

"The coup was seen as yet another episode in the historic cycle of violence by the Tutsi military against the Hutu, and this time the Hutu reacted with violence themselves. The Tutsi-dominated military were also carrying out reprisal attacks, murdering Hutu and those they perceived as supporting Hutu across the country," the report said.

Many have also responded through peaceful and concerted resistance. Almost immediately following the coup thousands of demonstrators filled the streets of Bujumbura in an unprecedented show of public opposition to the military. The army responded by shooting at the peaceful crowd. The crowd persisted and thousands more have joined them, in subsequent days, demonstrating peacefully despite threat of repression.

Their courage and determination keeps alive Melchior Ndadaye's conviction that a peaceful and united Burundi is possible, and may provide a crucial brake on a rapid progression toward extremism from both sides.

Gwen Schulman is a member of the Group de recherche international pour la libération d'Afrique (GRILA).



Melchior Ndadaye's steps toward reform were blocked when his government was overthrown last month.

left Burundi without an effective government. Bikomagu has stated that the troops will return to their barracks, and power will be restored to FRODEBU on condition that they are granted amnesty.

What remains of the FRODEBU government is scattered between neighbouring Rwanda, and various embassies in the Burundian capital, Bujumbura. A government-in-exile, led by the Public Health Minister, Dr Jean Minani, has been established in the Rwandan capital. It has rejected any possibility of an amnesty before it has regained its full

COMMENT

Student sterility in face of impotent politics

In 1989, the Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec (FEUQ) pleaded to the government in the *Devoir* to increase student fees by the rate of inflation. This compromise highlights an important fissure in the student movement.

Now we have a student movement representing 200 000 students united around the most important issue; to oppose the increase of tuition fees. Unfortunately, nothing seems to have changed in the mentality of the few people running the student movement.

The student movement used to be powerful, keeping tuition fees and accessible education on the political agenda. Yet, the movement is now diffused and unable to effectively represent student issues. Why? Because we have compromised ourselves.

At first glance, an increase of 1.9 per cent in 1989 may not seem exorbitant in the face of potential 50 per cent increases, yet the compound effect of consistent compromise has weakened the student movement and made it unable to achieve anything substantial.

The collusion between FEUQ and the government in 1989 has only contributed to the weakening of the student movement and not far down the road the student movement will have nothing to bargain with.

We cannot afford to meet the government half-way every two years else our universities turn into élitiste institutions. This time around we have to say NO MORE!

While it may seem to those financially well off and to some Americans that McGill is dirt cheap, may I point out that the relative cost of universities is irrelevant to the principle of accessible education. Any dollar amount restricts people from attending university.

What has to change are the people who negotiate on our behalf; they have to act on principle and stick to it. They must stop eating the bullshit the government feeds us in the guise of financial austerity and responsibility. There is no reason to compromise with the government or university administration when it comes to tuition fees.

They tell us they're cash-strapped, that education costs are skyrocketing. Yet, Public Security, unspecified line items and international affairs have been increasing at an even higher rate. Why should we pay for their mistakes and their eight-bedroom houses?

What about the corporations who benefit from our education? They don't pay a cent to the operations of the university. While resource companies in Québec increased sales in the last seven years by 30 per cent, the taxes they've paid have decreased 25 per cent. Meanwhile, our salaries have been frozen and our taxes have gone up.

Our government and university administration are effectively telling us to compromise so corporations can continue to pay fewer taxes.

Tell me. Who's the real greedy person here? Students because they have the lowest tuition rate in North America? I don't think so. It's time the student movement realised that too.

Damion Stodola, Kristin Andrews, Melanie Newton

LETTERS

Chopping the chop

To the Daily:

The lack of Native content in McGill's curriculum can breed "misinformation, ignorance and apathy which can result in racism." This was pointed out (ironically) on the front page of the same issue in which Adam Bradley's letter appeared. The "chop" could be viewed as symptomatic of this ignorance.

Of course Redmen fans are not "purposefully racist," however, stereotypes are perpetuated by activities such as the "chop." Believe it, Adam Bradley.

M. Cole
U3 Science

To the Daily:

Firstly and foremost: I am neither advocating nor discrediting the validity of the proposed False Memory Syndrome (FMS). Yet whether or not there is some truth to FMS it does not add to, or take away from, the right of the presentation of the topic.

After attending last Thursday's "speech" by Dr. Harold Leif, I find myself disappointed and disgusted with the narrow-mindedness of our university and community. Through childish displays of protest, such as coughing fits and the use of rattles, against Dr. Leif and FMS, one group has denied others access to ideas and information

that would allow them to form their own opinions.

I also find it ironic that these hecklers who tried to equate FMS with the Holocaust would attempt to use such Hitler-esque techniques as media-manipulation and censure of scientific thought to convey their message.

Science is a field based upon intellectual thought and inference; it can only progress through CIVIL and RESPECTFUL discussion. An auditorium of angry yells and whistles not only undermines the scientific process, but also undermines the credibility of those who protested.

N.B. hecklers, whistlers and the like — there are THREE aspects to every issue: Your side, Their side and the TRUTH. It is only through respectful listening and polite discussion that we will be able to discover the Truth (whether it be regarding FMS or another controversial issue).

Next time, please save your comment, complaints, insults, etc., for the designated question period and allow everyone the right of free speech and thought.

M. Walker
U3 Psychology

LETTERS

To the Daily:

Congratulations are in order. You have outdone yourselves. After your incoherent, unsubstantiated ramblings about the IMF/World Bank, and your gross violation of journalistic ethics by publishing remarks that the C.C. editor obviously intended to be off the record, I thought that your publication had sunk to an unsurpassable level of mediocrity. Apparently I was wrong.

In her blatantly mistitled front-page article, Reopening Redpath, Gillian Donald neglects to mention until over halfway through her harangue that Redpath Hall is not actually closed as such, but is in constant use by the music faculty, 16-20 hours a day, seven days a week, as it has been for forty years now. Surely, anyone with a grain of logic in their head can appreciate that rehearsal, performance and recordings space needs to be a little more specialized than study space — acoustics tend to be fairly irrelevant in a quiet reading room. Donald also seems to deem the presence of a priceless, antique pipe organ in Redpath a minor detail, mentioning it only in passing. She closes her article in overly biased fashion so typical of the *Daily*, letting students know where to sign up

for Lopo Champalimaud's misguided crusade to extricate the Faculty of Music from the hall.

Perhaps if Donald and Champalimaud actually took the time to attend one of the numerous free concerts offered in Redpath Hall, they truly would "appreciate the organ and the acoustics of the hall," and be less inclined to refer to the building as "being misused."

Surely there are other ways to expand student study space that to deprive music students of an invaluable performance venue. If you find McClelland Library busy, uncomfortable and oppressive, you are welcome to come study in the Music Library. It is quiet, relaxed, and rarely crowded, and who knows — you may even discover that music students do in fact qualify as part of the McGill student body. And if we must be continually forced to support this appalling excuse for a student newspaper through our student fees, perhaps you at the *Daily* could make even a minimal effort to represent all McGill students, not just those who congregate on the Arts steps.

Darcy Argue
U1 Music

No comment

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SINCE 1911
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THE MCGILL DAILY

The social regulation of sex and gender

'Gender outlaws' speak out at the public hearings

BY LIZ UNNA

Some say the world is divided sexually into two groups — you're either homo or hetero, right? Dualism is great — it's simple and easy, it's clean and concise...

But the squeaky-cleaness of it is boring. And, unless you're Beaver Cleaver, it's unrealistic.

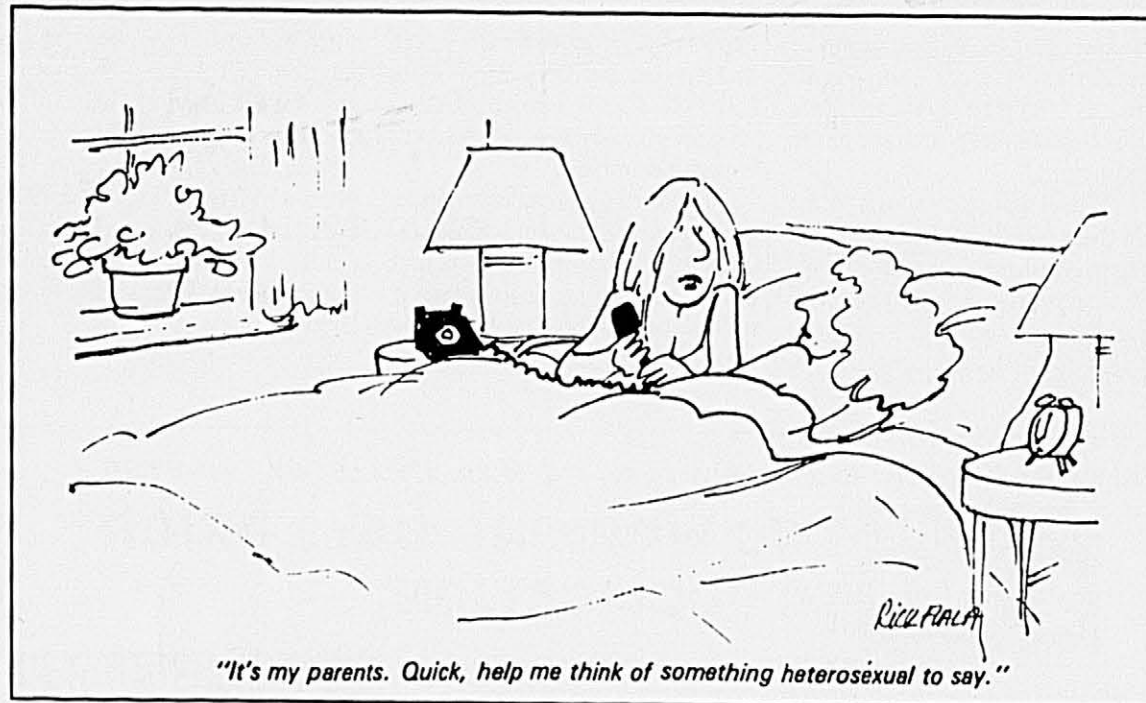
Two presentations at the public hearings on discrimination and violence towards gays and lesbians, taking place this week at the Québec Human Rights Commission (HRC), confront this too-easy vision head on.

These groups have felt to a certain extent, excluded from the agenda, which focuses primarily on gays and lesbians, and have made an effort to be included in the proceedings. Their goal is to inform the public about the issues which people who are sexually 'neither here nor there' contend with on a day-to-day basis.

"The hearings exclude bi-sexuality and transgenderism," said Caroline Côté, a facilitator at Bi-The-Way, a bisexual women's group. "Where do we fit in all this?"

Côté and two colleagues will be presenting a paper at the hearings on behalf of Bi-The-Way on Friday. Their brief deals with the discriminatory immigration policies which same-sex couples face in Québec.

Leanne Franson, also a presenter



"It's ironic that I'm scared of being discriminated against and losing my job [because of the hearings], when these hearings are about discrimination and violence in the gay community."

for Bi-The-Way, has been trying to bring her girlfriend into Canada from the UK, but because they comprise a same-sex couple, have been turned down.

The brief recommends adopting the Australian model of immigration policy for same-sex couples. This policy allows Australians to bring their same-sex partner into the country on a six month visa, renewable for up to two years. If, after this time, the couple is still together, the partner is granted Australian citizenship.

Ki Namaste, a semiotics student at UQAM, will be presenting the only brief on transgenderism at the public hearings on Friday.

"We live in a world that thinks there are two sexes," says Ki Namaste. "Most people don't understand what it means to live as a transgender."

By transgender, Namaste understands "people who live outside normative sex gender relations" — or transsexuals, hermaphrodites, drag queens, and other 'gender outlaws'.

Namaste feels that people who transgress 'normal' gender lines have been largely ignored in the media, and even by the gay community in general. Violence is one of the major problems faced by transsexuals which Namaste hopes to address at the hearings. S/he points to a British study done on transsexuals which shows that 53 per cent of them have been physically assaulted.

"And that's just physical assault, that's not losing your job, or being kicked out of your apartment. That's

just being bashed," s/he said.

Namaste also deals with the issue of 'passing'. "If you're transsexual, you have to 'pass' 100 per cent [as a member of the 'opposite' sex], or else you get bashed," s/he stated. 'Passing' can involve taking hormones, binding the breasts, surgery and voice therapy.

The latter part of his/her presentation looks at law and social services with regards to transgenderism.

"The law part is easy. It doesn't exist," said Namaste. "Article 10 of the Charter of Rights doesn't mention transsexuals... We can lose our jobs, we can be denied custody. Something like 95% of transsexuals lose their jobs."

Namaste will also examine the problems faced by transsexuals in the sex trade. "Because so many transsexuals lose their jobs, many of them turn to prostitution," s/he said.

Furthermore, says Namaste, the judicial system doesn't recognize the specific needs of the transgender community.

"When drag queens and transsexuals get arrested, they are categorized according to their 'original, biological' sex... If you go to prison, they take away your hormones. So you are forced by the state to resume living as a man," s/he added.

Namaste hopes at the very least that the HRC hearings will spark discussion on the issue of gender identity. "I hope that people can begin to understand some of the realities that we deal with, and then start to develop social policy which addresses them."

Côté also hopes the hearings will inform the public. She was slightly nervous about being in the public eye.

"I freaked at first. But it's true, either you're out or you're not. It's ironic that I'm scared of being discriminated against and losing my job [because of the hearings], when these hearings are about discrimination and violence in the gay community."

... LETTERS

Daily wasting dough

To the Daily:

It was nice to see that, on November 10, you published the financial statements of the Daily Publications Society as a April 30, 1993. I suppose this is because the *Daily* is in some way accountable to the students of McGill University.

That being the case, as a long-time student, I submit that your financial management leaves something to be desired.

The Society's current ratio (current assets divided by current liabilities) on April 30 was 18.

That means that you shouldn't have any problems meeting your current liabilities, which in itself, is good. However, it means that a large part of your current assets are just sitting around. You have \$162 000 invested, I assume, in the money-market earning maybe 4 per cent interest.

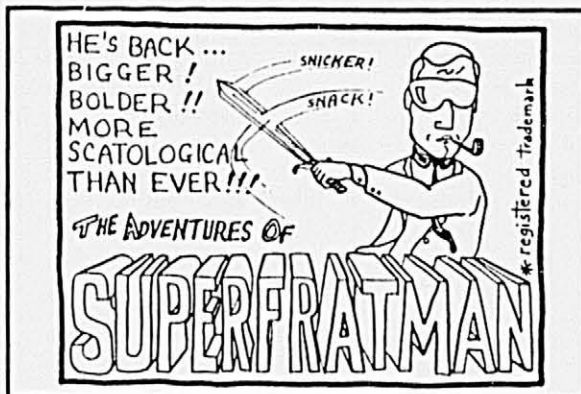
How can you justify this idle balance, when the year ended April 30, 1993, you generated \$132 990 in revenues from students' fees?

Although all the students who pay \$6.50 a year to the *Daily* probably find this amount relatively insignificant, I think that a large majority would rather

see this amount directed elsewhere if they knew it was otherwise going to sit in your coffers for most of the year.

Instead of maintaining such a large

result of a few good years when we made a profit. Deficits, like last year's, and the projected deficit for this year will reduce that surplus.



amount of short term investments from year-to-year simply because at the beginning of each school year it might take some time to get your share of students' fees from the SSMU, you'd be wise to seek short-term financing elsewhere and let us decide how to spend our money.

Sincerely,
Christopher Kim
U3 Management

Ed note. \$132 990 is about one-third of our operating budget. \$162 000 is the

but they still do go up.

For your information, 4 per cent interest on your \$6.50 is 26 cents. Also we had an open general meeting Friday, November 12, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon and we invited our auditor to answer questions. NO ONE EXCEPT DPS board members showed up.

Sign of the times

To the Daily:

There was a time when universities were the breeding grounds of democ-

racy, when if we disagreed with an idea we attacked the idea, not the person presenting it.

Most importantly, it was a time when university students wanted to learn all the perspectives on an issue so that they could make an independent, informed decision as to which view they would subscribe.

The recent disgusting display of mob mentality at the FMS symposium is a sign of the times. A sign of how we have somehow turned into self-righteous, close-minded, paranoid cows. God help anyone who presents a view which contradicts the established view of the herd. We are one step away from book burning, and it is being promoted by those who would call themselves "liberals". What irony.

Alexander Boldizar
U3 Arts

Donna Stern, Brad Buchanan, and Andrew Fleming: Your letters are all over our 300 word limit. Please come and chop them down. Also: Arab Students' Association, we need a name of someone who can sign the letter on behalf of your organization, sorry about any confusion.

The *Daily* welcomes all letters under 300 words. Add your name, program, year and phone number. Anonymity can be provided; talk to an editor beforehand. We print all letters provided they are not racist, sexist, homophobic or slanderous. Opinions can be expressed in the form of a Hyde Park, no more than 500 words. The *Daily* can also be reached by e-mail at #MCD@MUSICA.MCGILL.CA.



EVENTS

The landscape of Iraq is now littered with more than 40 tonnes of DUP residue. After oxidization (which happens during the explosion of the shells) the shells become highly toxic.

McGill's Black Students' Network is hosting a movie night. Friday November 19th at 18h00. Movies: She's Gotta Have It and Shaft. Free, leacock 26.

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Food banks struggle in economic uncertainty

More and more people are reaching for food banks to make ends meet

BY CAROL McQUEEN

MONTREAL (CUP) — Food banks originally developed as an emergency stop-gap for people who fell through the social security net. In just over a decade, they have grown to become an essential component of our social safety net, and been forced to cope with the ever-increasing number of people abandoned by various levels of government whose priorities lie in slashing deficits and reducing spending.

In 1981, the city of Edmonton became home to Canada's first food bank. It was set up as an emergency measure to help people affected by the economic nose-dive of the early eighties. According to the Canadian Association of Food Banks (CAFB), there are now 2,000 feeding programs across Canada, providing milk for schoolchildren or food baskets for needy families.

"Every month, 750 000 Canadians go to a food bank. As some require food more than once per year, we estimate that approximately 2.2 million different people will use food bank services in any given year. That number has doubled since 1989," says Barry Davidson, national coordinator of CAFB.

"We give out 20 tons of food per day," says John Pasquini, general director of Harvest Montréal, the city's main food bank distributor. "The image of the poor person as the street person is outdated."

"There are more and more needy families."

John Kinloch, coordinator of Multi Caf, a community cafeteria in Montréal, estimates that some 600 000 Quebecers use food banks every year.

"That's almost 10 per cent of the population," he points out.

It's not difficult to understand why more and more Canadians are faced with the threat of hunger. Minimum wage salaries and welfare rates do not match the rising cost of living. Statistics Canada sets the poverty line for an individual at earnings of \$14 951 a year. However, a full-time job at minimum wage comes to a little under \$11,000 a year. A single person on Welfare can receive a maximum of just over \$7,000 per year. Rent often eats up more than half this amount. Once other bills are paid, there is very little left over for food.

Merle Reisler receives \$580 a month in welfare benefits. Her rent is \$325. Once she has paid her Hydro and gas bills, there is very little

left for food or other basic necessities.

"I have three cats which I love very much. It's expensive to buy cat food. I always look for the cheapest prices," she says.

Unable to afford a bus pass, Reisler makes the daily lunch-time trek to Multi Caf on foot.

Bob — not his real name — feels the pinch too. He visits a nearby Food Depot once a month.

"It's simple. Welfare does not give me enough money. I try to get cash jobs on the side, but it is not always easy, especially in the winter."

Bob gets about \$500 welfare assistance a month. He says by the time his bills are paid, he only has \$40 for groceries.

"I don't mind living off crackers and water, but my young daughter who stays with me every other weekend needs more than that. I don't

but make less and less money. If I'm lucky, I earn \$600 a month," she says.

Of that amount, \$385 disappears into rent for the small apartment she shares with her 14-year-old daughter.

"My daughter always wants all kinds of nice things, but I cannot afford any of it. If I didn't come to the food bank this week, I wouldn't have enough to eat," she says.

Rich-Poor Gap Widens

Food banks are no longer restricted to a few people who slip through Canada's so-called welfare safety net. With the "structural" job losses of the current recession, more and more people depend on food banks to survive.

The Tory policies of the 1980s only made matters worse. Determined to reduce the deficit Brian Mulroney did nothing but slash so-

country as rich as Canada. There is no need for it. It is absurd. Our governments steal from the poor to give to the rich. It is Robin Hood in reverse."

The federal government grants numerous tax shelters to the rich, Alper notes. For example, the Tory government increased the rate of an RRSP to 18 per cent of total income or a maximum of \$13,500. This alone meant hundreds of millions lost in tax revenue. "It is obvious to me that no one in government has ever lived in poverty," he says. "I would like to see them get by on a welfare check."

Multi Caf coordinator Kinloch goes one step further. He sees a definite connection between governments relinquishing the responsibility to ensure a decent standard of living for all Canadians and the tremendous expansion of the non-profit food bank industry.

"Governments abuse the food bank service. They cut and cut social programs, expecting food banks to pick up the slack. The ruling class should be glad food banks exist. There would be riots in the streets if they did not," Kinloch says.

In her 1992 book *Food for Thought*, Marlene Webber argues governments promote food banks because they lead to the privatization of public welfare. Webber says governments can cut social spending, knowing food banks will work to prevent anyone from going hungry.

In effect, governments in Canada have transferred the burden of ensuring a decent standard of living for all citizens to the private sector. Private charity is seen as the new solution to poverty and welfare agencies often refer people to food depots.

Because food banks exist, the government can ignore hunger and malnutrition.

It's a no-win game for food banks.

"Multi Caf would definitely like to close down. Food banks are not the solution to the poverty," says

David Alper. "We need political solutions. We need to put people back to work. We need to attack corporate tax shelters for the rich."

Food Depot coordinator Michael Kay calls for even more drastic change.

"The functioning of our economy is based on non-human criteria, on constant growth and low levels of debt. When the economy periodically gets ahead of itself, a lull results. It is the regular folk that suffer," Kay says.

"Instead of cutting social programs, high salaries should be cut and companies should be taxed more."

Hughes of the Community Council says government spending is going to the corporations instead of the people.

"Corporations benefit from medicare, well-paved roads and good schools," he says. "They should support the burden of taxation just as much as we do. Right now the government receives 90 per cent of its revenue from personal income tax."

Hughes adds that he believes Canada needs to develop a comprehensive industrial policy to put people back to work, especially in the manufacturing industry where 400,000 have lost jobs since 1988.

He calls for a more equitable distribution of income and an end to the wastage of food.

Food banks are doing what they can to end the cycle of dependency. Both Multi Caf and the Depot have set up programs to help people defend their rights and retrain them for the workforce.

The Food Depot has started an information service which refers people to job-training programs and informs them of their rights as welfare recipients and tenants.

Multi Caf organizes language classes and recreational outings. It works closely with other community organizations.

Food banks won't disappear in the near future. "A fundamental right in life is to eat properly," Michael Kay of the Food Depot says. "Food banks provide for this essential need."

Perhaps 2.2 million different people will use food bank services in any given year, twice as many as in 1989. 600,000 of those are in Québec.

know what I would do if the food bank weren't here," he says.

Most people who use food banks are eligible to work but cannot find jobs. Even those with jobs are not secure. From one day to the next, they can find themselves in a hole.

That's what happened to Marguerite Gouel, a mother of two. She worked at a Ramada Inn until it closed down in 1992. She received no severance package or vacation pay. With her husband only working part time, Gouel finds it very hard to cope.

"I was shy to go to the food bank at first, but I need to. It can happen to anybody," she says.

Even people with jobs find it hard to make ends meet. Barbara (who did not want to give her last name) is a trained nurse who cannot practice in Quebec because she doesn't speak French. She survives by babysitting, earning four to five dollars an hour.

"I work at least 40 hours a week. I seem to work harder and harder,

cial programs, cut back on family allowance payments, reduce unemployment insurance benefits and eliminate funding for public housing.

"They brought in all kinds of measures detrimental to the poor, such as free trade and the G.S.T.," says Jason Hughes, a food bank administrator. "In the 1980s, we saw the emergence of the working poor. Minimum wages are not enough to ensure a decent standard of living."

David Alper, director of Multi Caf, is even more explicit. He believes the root cause for the existence of food banks is the widening gap between the rich and poor in Canada. Government is the main cause of this ever-deepening chasm, he says.

"Hunger should not exist in a

